

HADHRAT ISA^{as} BORN WITH OR WITHOUT A FATHER

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SYNOPSIS

Two Groups—What about the Imam Mahdi?—Birth of Hadhrat Isa^{as} is a Sign—Like Adam—Allegation of Adultery—Yahya (as) Dutiful towards Parents / Isa (as) towards Mother—Call them by their Fathers—Who Started Celibacy: Jews or Christians?

TWO GROUPS

It is a well-known fact that Hadhrat Isa^{as} was born without a father. This immaculate conception is scientifically discussed by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih-IV, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh} in his book *“Christianity—Journey from Facts to Fiction”*. However, there are some Muslim groups who believe otherwise. They insist that Joseph the Carpenter was the biological father of Hadhrat Isa^{as} and that Mary had already married to him before conceiving the child. One such group is “Ahl-e-Qur`ān”, i.e., the followers of Mr. Ghulam Ahmad Pervez. In his book *“Sh`ulā-e-Mastōr”* (Hidden Flame) Mr. Pervez has described the life of Hadhrat Isa^{as} from his birth to death. Ironically, no evidence whatsoever has been presented in support of his belief that Hadhrat Isa^{as} had a biological father, neither from the Holy Qur`ān nor the Bible. What we find in this book is a mere concoction. He inserts his own statements as the authoritative parts of the translations of the relative verses. This version, being mere concoction, does not merit any discussion and can be rejected prima facie.

The second group, who has similar belief like Mr. Pervez, is Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha`at-e-Islam Lahore, a.k.a. Lahori group. Three scholars of

this group, Maulvi Muhammad Ali; Mr. Abdul Haq Vidyarthi; and Dr. Basharat Ahmad have discussed this subject in their books. First two gentlemen have not offered any evidence but merely presented their belief. Dr. Basharat Ahmad, however, has discussed it in detail and attempted to forge some evidences and explanations.

WHAT ABOUT THE IMAM MAHDI^{as}?

One common and very unfortunate aspect of their writings is that, though they call themselves Ahmadis, rather true and real followers of the Promised Messiah^{as}, none of them has ever quoted him. It is a great irony that they claim to consider him the 'Just Arbiter' of this age, the Imam Mahdi, but they do not bother to check his ruling about this matter. The obvious reason to avoid the decision of the Promised Messiah^{as} about the immaculate conception of Hadhrat Isa^{as} is that he has clearly mentioned that Hadhrat Isa^{as} was born without a biological father. He writes:

"It is included in our beliefs, that the birth of both Isa and Yahya was in an extraordinary manner; and there is nothing in it we might call remote from reason. Allah has referred, to the birth of both in one and the same Sura, that one should bear witness to the veracity of the other." Mowahibur Rahman, page 70

In the same place, the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote further:

"In the eyes of people gifted with discernment, there can be only two probabilities: Either we say that conception took place as a direct result of the Word spoken by the Lord God in regard to the matter. Or, God forbid, that he was a child born in sin; and we are saying this in conformity with the Qur`ān, and the Injīl. So take care you do not come to lose the path of success, and the truth."

Similarly, on May 5, 1904, on a question by someone, the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote:

“On a perusal of the Holy Qur`ān, this is what emerges as the truth, namely, that Jesus was fatherless; and this is a matter on which no question can come to lie. Where Allāh calls this birth as resembling the birth of Adam, it is an indication that in this birth there is an element of an extraordinary process of nature, to which a reference had to be made, for an explanation, by likening it to the example of Adam.” (Badr , May 16, 1907, page 3)

Again:

“Our faith and belief is this that Jesus was born of no father, and Allāh has the power to do all things. The rationalists, called Naturies among us, who try to establish that he was born of a human father they are making a serious blunder. The Lord God of such people is a dead Lord God. The prayers and supplications of such people are not granted who assume that Allāh cannot cause a child to be born independently of the agency of a human male in the role of a father. We consider a man who holds this view to have fallen out of the pale of Islam.” (Al-Hakam, June 24, 1901)

BIRTH OF HADHRAT ISA^{AS} IS A SIGN:

In Sura Maryam, Allāh mentions that when Mary was given the glad tiding of a blessed son, she astonishingly exclaimed that how she can have a child when no man has touched her and that she is not unchaste. Allāh assured her that it will happen as promised and that this birth shall be a sign for people, a mercy, and a decreed matter. Earlier in this surah, birth of Hadhrat Yahya^{as} is mentioned but without qualifying it as a sign for people, a mercy, or a decreed matter. It clearly shows that the birth of Hadhrat Isa^{as} was different and distinct from the birth of Hadhrat Yahya^{as}. The common trait of both these cases is that the deficiencies were repaired without external help. However, the birth of Hadhrat Isa^{as} is called a sign, a mercy, and a matter decreed because it is more unusual than that of the birth of Hadhrat Yahya^{as}. In

case of Hadhrat Yahya^{as}, an aged couple with one partner as barren is giving birth to a child, which is strange but not apparently impossible. However, in the case of Hadhrat Isa^{as}, no one had ever heard of a woman giving birth to a child without having a relationship with any man. That is why it was declared as a sign.

LIKE ADAM

The Holy Qur`ān mentions the likeness of Hadhrat Isa^{as} with Adam^{as}. Dr. Basharat Ahmad of Lahori group argues that it is not written anywhere that Adam^{as} was born without parents. This statement of Dr. Basharat Ahmad is quite strange. If Adam^{as} was not born without parents then the question arises that how the parents of Adam^{as} were born. This unending chain can go back in time infinitely unless we reach a starting point when human life started on this earth. Dr. Basharat Ahmad seems to believe in Darwin's theory of evolution and hints that man is evolved from apes. He writes and I quote and translate:

“پہلا جوڑا جو انسان کا پیدا ہوا وہ کس طرح کسی حیوانی حالت سے ترقی کر کے انسانی حالت میں منتقل ہوا یہ ایک راز ہے جس کی عقدہ کشائی تا حال کسی تسلی بخش طریقے سے نہیں ہوئی۔ کہتے ہیں کہ کوئی درمیانی حالت کی مخلوق تھی جس سے ترقی کر کے انسان بنا اور تنزل کر کے بندر بنا۔ کونوا قرۃ خاسین میں بھی یہی اشارہ معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ دونوں کا ماخذ اور اصل ایک ہے۔ ترقی کرے تو انسان انسان ہے ورنہ ایک ذلیل بندر ہے۔” (پیدائش مسیح از روئے قرآن و انجیل۔ ص۔ ۱۱)

“How the first born human pair evolved from animal to human form is a mystery that has not been satisfactorily solved so far. It is said that the progressed form of a middle creature became human and in regression it became ape. ‘Be ye apes, despised’ also seems to point that both have same source and origin. A human deserves to be called human only if he progresses. Otherwise he is nothing but a despised ape.”

He argues that similitude of Hadhrat Isa^{as} with Adam^{as} is not in birth but in being a human and a prophet. If this were true, his similitude could have been given with any other prophet. Comparison with Adam^{as} was made because Christians argue that Hadhrat Isa^{as} is divine as he was born without father. In rebuttal, Allāh argues that if father-less birth makes one divine then Adam^{as} is more worth to be divine as he was born even without a mother.

ALLEGATION OF ADULTERY

[4:157] And because of their disbelief and their uttering against Mary a grievous calumny,

Another evidence in support of father-less birth of Hadhrat Isa^{as} is that the Jews alleged Mary of adultery. If she were married to Joseph the Carpenter, nobody would have raised any finger towards her. When angel informed Mary about the birth of Hadhrat Isa^{as}, she said that I am not unchaste (بِئْسَا). The same word is used for her by the Jews when they remarked that her parents were not bad and unchaste (بِئْسَا). It clearly proves that the Jews were not arguing against the prophet-hood of Hadhrat Isa^{as}, as contended by Dr. Basharat Ahmad, but alleging Mary of adultery. No doubt that when his mother brought him before her people Hadhrat Isa^{as} was not a child in a cradle but an adult. As mentioned in the Holy Qur`ān, revelation is not sent to children but to adult men. Allāh says:

[21:8] And We sent none as Messengers before thee but men to whom We sent revelations.

It proves that revelation is sent only to men, not to children. Hadhrat Isa^{as} presented his claim of being the Messiah before the Jews, but they

rejected his claim on the basis of the alleged adultery of Mary, as it is written in Torah:

[Deuteronomy 23: 2] *No one born of a forbidden marriage nor any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, even down to the tenth generation.*

Therefore, their contention was that how can a person born out of wedlock be a Prophet / Messiah.

DUTIFUL TOWARDS PARENTS—TOWARDS MOTHER

Another irrefutable evidence of father-less birth of Hadhrat Isa^{as} is that in Sura Maryam, it is mentioned that Hadhrat Yahya^{as} has been ordained to be dutiful towards his parents:

[19:15] And dutiful toward his parents. And he was not haughty and rebellious.

Whereas, in the same Sura, Hadhrat Isa^{as} is quoted as saying that he has been ordained to be dutiful to his mother:

[19:33] 'And He has made me dutiful toward my mother, and He has not made me haughty and unblessed.

If he had a father like Hadhrat Yahya^{as}, why did he say that I have been ordained to be dutiful to my mother? Why did not he include his father in this statement? Mentioning only his mother proves that he had no biological human father.

Dr. Basharat Ahmad attempts to defend his position by saying that mentioning his mother only shows that when Hadhrat Isa^{as} was making this statement his father had died by that time. But we must keep in mind that Hadhrat Yahya^{as} was born in very old age of his parents.

Mentioning his qualities, Allāh says that he was not arrogant and rebellious towards his parents but dutiful towards them. These qualities can only be expressed and demonstrated, knowingly and wilfully, by grown-ups and not by children. If his father was alive till he reached that age, there are strong chances that the so-called father of Hadhrat Isa^{as} was alive till that time. Nevertheless, it is only a surmise and not an authentic historical fact that the so-called father of Hadhrat Isa^{as} had already died when he made that statement of being dutiful to his mother.

CALL THEM BY THEIR FATHERS!

Allāh says in the Holy Qur`ān that it is more equitable in the sight of Allāh that you call people by the names of their fathers:

[33:6] Call them by the names of their fathers. That is more equitable in the sight of Allah.

If Hadhrat Isa^{as} had human father, Allāh must have called him by his father's name which is the more equitable in His own sight. But, amazingly, Allāh calls him by the name of his mother as "Son of Mary" and not as "Son of Joseph". This proves that Hadhrat Isa^{as} had no biological human father. Dr. Basharat Ahmad argues that Hadhrat Isaas was called by the name of his mother as she was famous for being a servant of temple. This argument is quite flimsy and untenable as there is no such condition in the above quoted verse.

WHO STARTED CELIBACY—JEWS OR CHRISTIANS?

Dr. Basharat Ahmad argued that though Mary exclaimed that how she can have a child while no man has ever touched her, but then she thought (*How Dr. Basharat Ahmad came to know this is a secret only he knows*)

that she may have a child after marriage. But the problem was that she was dedicated for the service of the temple and couldn't marry. Dr. Basharat Ahmad falsely says that though it was not prescribed in the Jewish law, the Jews had innovated celibacy. In support of his claim Dr. Basharat Ahmad quite wrongly interprets and quotes this verse:

[57:28] Then We caused Our Messengers to follow in their footsteps; and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow them, and We gave him the Gospel. And We placed in the hearts of those who accepted him compassion and mercy. But monasticism which they invented for themselves — We did not prescribe it for them

As we can clearly see, Allāh says that it was the Christians, those who followed Hadhrat Isa^{as}, who started monasticism. But Dr. Basharat Ahmad, on the other hand, in a futile attempt to prove his point, attributes it to the Jews. If it were the Jews who started celibacy and monasticism, it should have been continued in them till-date and we must have found Jewish nuns and Jewish monasteries also in this age. But we observe that, though there are Christian nuns and monasteries, there is no such thing in Jewish society anywhere in the world. It is written in Encyclopaedia Judaica under the word 'celibacy' that this concept is alien to Judaism:

CELIBACY. *The deliberate renunciation of marriage is all but completely alien to Judaism. Scarcely any references to celibates are to be found in the Bible or in the Talmud, and no medieval rabbi is known to have lived as a celibate (see L. Loew, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2 (1890), 112; 3 (1893), 29ff.). The demands of celibacy were included neither among the acts of self-denial imposed upon the Nazirite (Num. 6:1–21), nor among the special restrictions incumbent upon the priesthood (Lev. 21:1–15). Celibacy among Jews was a strictly sectarian practice; Josephus ascribes it to some of the *Essenes (Wars 2:120–21). Equally exceptional is the one solitary case of the talmudist Simeon ben *Azzai who explained his celibacy with the words:*

“My soul is fond of the Law; the world will be perpetuated by others” (Yev. 63b). The norm of Jewish law, thought, and life is represented rather by the opening clause in the matrimonial code of the Shulḥan Arukh: “Every man is obliged to marry in order to fulfill the duty of procreation, and whoever is not engaged in propagating the race is as if he shed blood, diminishing the Divine image and causing His Presence to depart from Israel” (Sh. Ar., EH 1:1). The law even provides for the courts to compel a man to marry if he is still single after passing the age of 20 (ibid., 1:3). Since the late Middle Ages, however, such authority has not been exercised (Isserles, ad loc.). Only if a person “cleaves to the study of the Torah like Simeon b. Azzai” can his refusal to marry be condoned, provided he can control his sexual lust (ibid. 4).

*The Jewish opposition to celibacy is founded first on the positive precept to “be fruitful and multiply” as a cardinal duty to perpetuate life, a duty which also underlies the attitude of Judaism toward *birth control. Second, celibacy is incompatible with the Jewish scheme of creation in which a man is regarded as half a human being unless he be married, and in which “he who is without a wife lives without joy, without blessing,... without peace” (Yev. 62b, based on Gen. 5:2). Third, far from regarding celibacy as a means to the attainment of holiness, Judaism views it as an impediment to personal sanctification. This is strikingly illustrated by the rabbinic use of the term kiddushin (“sanctification”) for marriage and by the insistence that the high priest be married (Lev. 21:13), especially at the time when he officiates in the Holy of Holies on the holiest day of the year (Yoma 1:1, based on Lev. 16:6, 11, and 17). For similar reasons, unmarried people are also debarred from holding certain public and religious offices, notably as judges in capital cases (Sanh. 36b) and as synagogue readers (Sof. 14:17; cf. Oh 53:9). Jewish moralists in all ages have advocated severe self-control and occasionally even a measure of asceticism, but they did not encourage celibacy or any form of monasticism (although exceptionally there was a note of sympathy, cf. Bahya’s Ḥovot ha-Levavot 193, Abraham b. Ḥiyya’s Meditation of the Sad Soul 133, and Abraham Maimonides’ Highways of Perfection 249, 265,*

279). *Their writings and teachings reveal no trace of the condemnation of marriage as a compromise with evil, a concept already found in the New Testament (Mat. 19:12; I Cor. 7:9; Luke 20:27–36). The notion that there was something immoral in marriage was refuted in a special tract by *Naḥmanides as early as the 13th century (Graetz, Gesch, 7 (19083), 41). [Immanuel Jakobovits]*

It is unfortunate that Dr. Basharat Ahmad has falsely attributed this concept to the Holy Qur`ān, that Jews started the innovation of celibacy, only to prove his point. Since there was no tradition of celibacy in Jews, it was absolutely not an impediment for Mary to get married and have children. Therefore, the whole façade, created by DR. Basharat Ahmad on this fake foundation collapses and it is proved beyond any doubt that Hadhrat Isa^{as} was born without a biological human father. *All Praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.*

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